

## SOME RAILROAD TALES.

Stories Illustrating the Humorous Side of Life Among the Freight Agents.

What Came of Not Putting Bob Owens' Costly Bull on the Schedule.

The Error of a Car Tracer—The Poor Minister Whose Box of Books Went Astray.

The humorous side of the railroad business is confined almost entirely to the misdirected freight and lost car departments. In railroad circles common consent makes the tracer of strayed and stolen cars, and the man who busies his brains about other people's mistakes in shipping, the wittiest in the service. When the general manager of the road gets a fit of the blues over what Shakespeare, had he lived in the days of railroads, might call a "cur direct," from some rival line, the accepted belief among railroad men is that he sends for one of these officials and forgets his troubles in a good story of the tracer's latest experience. What one of these gentlemen has not met with on the ludicrous side of humanity is scarcely worth knowing. From the tale of Bob Owens' famous Durham bull to the location of a lost Canadian line freight car in the swamps of Florida they are chuck full of choice stories.

Bob Owens' Bull is not exactly in line as a lost car or a package of misdirected freight, but he was the property of a railroad president and occupies a conspicuous place in railroad history. Marion and Sheridan Knowles, of the Savannah, Florida & Western road, enjoyed a personal acquaintance with the leading characters in this bit of railroad history, and says he "knew the bull by sight." He describes the animal as a magnificent specimen of the Durham breed, with a jovian crest, an eye of fire and bright scarlet nostrils. He was a bull with a fairly good opinion of himself and he didn't care much who knew it. Bob Owens, president of the Norfolk & Western road, running between Bristol, in West Virginia, and Norfolk, Va., bought him in England and installed him as master of the herd on a very fine farm which he owned directly on the line of the Norfolk & Western. One of the characters on the Norfolk & Western was an engineer by the name of Alf Whalen, an excellent man in his business, and with a national reputation for nerve and coolness. One bright day, when Whalen was running a freight train down the side of the mountain, at the base of which was situated Owens' stock farm, he was a trifle disconcerted to see in the center of the track, directly ahead of him, the famous Durham bull, with his tail standing straight up, head erect and pawing the ground savagely. The train was running at an unusually rapid rate, but Whalen pulled the throttle open, and the engine bounded ahead for all there was in her. The bull was hit fairly and lifted over the mountain side in a twinkling.

The station agent at the farm, when Whalen told him what had happened, telegraphed President Owens the facts. Whalen pulled into the depot at Norfolk two hours later and was met by Owens. Old Bob was wild with rage. He spoke with difficulty.

"Well," said he, "you played—"

"How—how—what do you mean?" asked poor Whalen.

"Killed my bull, — you, eh?"

"Well, now, see here, Mr. Owens, if you wanted that bull to run on this road you should have put him on the schedule. You see, he was running on my time. The track and right of way belonged to me and I just took it."

A lost car-tracer on a western road had a superintendent whose language, as a rule, was so thickly interlarded with oaths and vituperation that it would hardly pass in polite society. He had it in for the tracer, and once, when the latter in explanation of his inability to locate a lost laundry check, which had been mislaid by the general manager, modestly claimed that the recovery of such property was not exactly in the line of his duties, the superintendent opened on him in a choice collection of blue profanity that made the poor tracer tremble. When he escaped from his superior he related his woes to a brother subordinate in the superintendent's office.

"Why didn't you cuss him back? I always cuss back just as hard as he does. Try it next time and see how it works. Was all the consolation he got."

The next time the two met the tracer said:

"Well, I tried it. The old man called me in again and took me a terrible cussing over the cuss. I took your advice and cussed back."

"Well, what luck?"

"Oh, he did, eh? Well, see here, where were you when you cussed him?"

"In his office, of course."

"Well, well. That explains it. That was wrong—dead wrong. Now he cusses me here in Kansas City and I wait until I get out to Santa Fe and cuss him back. My God! man, what do you mean by giving it to him in his face?"

A prominent divine in a large eastern city once laid himself open to a grave charge, and was placed in a peculiarly unpleasant predicament by the misarrangement of his trunk, or box rather, filled with books and manuscripts on scriptural subjects. He had an extensive reputation as a student of religious history, and had for about a year previous to the date of the incident resorted to being engaged in a series of articles on the books of the bible and on scriptural folklore among the peoples where Christianity had its birth. He was billed to deliver an address before a convocation of the ministers of his church, and before leaving home had packed an old cedar chest with books containing data for his lecture and some advance copies of a work which he had in press. He had the chest directed to the hall where the meetings were being held. He arrived before the chest did, however, and spent two days, while waiting for its delivery, in participating in the discussions on religious topics before the convocation. Unfortunately, he had been in retirement so long and had studied so hard that he was strangely out of touch with his brother ministers on the tenets of their common church. From discussing the views of others he soon found that he himself was becoming a subject for discussion, and, finally, by the time his chest of books arrived, he was horrified to learn that a few remarks of his on Dr. Mesmer and on hypnotism had been turned into an endorsement of spiritualism.

The last chest arrived about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, just before the meeting, and while a large crowd was standing idly in the doorway. The worthy doctor had it carefully deposited on the table in full view. He examined it casually, and noticed that the lock had been broken, and the lid was held on by straps and ropes. He was too much excited to look at it carefully. He was anxious to get on the inside.

"Now, gentlemen," said he, "I will show you one of my works which establishes my belief in the doctrine of my fathers." He cut the straps, lifted the lid, and hastily plunging his hand into the box, took up a book which he handed to the worthy moderator of the meeting.

"Footfalls on the Boundaries of Another World," by Andrew Jackson Davis," read the

astonished moderator. "So you are a spiritualist and carry a box full of books on the new religion. I am surprised, sir—surprised that you should dare insult me by handing me such trash." He threw the offensive book on the floor, turned on his heel and walked away, followed by the other horrified brethren.

On examination the demoralized doctor of divinity found that the railroad had sent him the wrong chest. The agent calmly explained to him that after he (the doctor) had bothered him for two days about the non-arrival of his confounded old box, he thought to please him by sending him a cedar chest which he "had in stock," as he expressed it, for three years among a lot of uncalled-for freight. After his own box had traveled the full length of the road, and been plastered with no end of tags and express company cards, it was returned to the doctor at his residence.

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LAND NOTICES.

NOTICE OF PUBLICATION.

LAND OFFICE AT HELENA, MONT., November 19, 1889.  
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE FOLLOWING named settler has filed notice of his intention to make final proof in support of his claim, and that said proof will be made before the register and receiver at Helena, Mont., on December 20, 1889, viz: Jacob Leach, adm'r, estate of Katie Renek, deceased, who made pre-emption D. S. No. 900 for the ne. sec. 18 twp. 9 n r 6 w. He names the following witnesses to prove his continuous residence upon and cultivation of said land, viz: Frank Takat, John H. Gilson, Edward Burns and Frank Hahn, of Elliston, Mont. S. W. LANGHORNE, Register.



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HELENA, Nov. 19, 1889.  
The third annual meeting of the stockholders of the Gould & Carter Mining company will be held at the office of McCone, Carter & Clapp on Friday, Nov. 23rd at 2 p. m.  
By order of president,  
F. E. BECK, Sec.

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